Numb. 100

The TATLER.

By *Isaac Bickerstaff* Esq;

Jam redit & Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna. Virg.

From *Saturday November* 26. to *Tuesday November* 29. 1709.

Sheer-Lane, November 28.

I WAS last Week taking a solitary Walk in the Garden of *Lincolns-Inn*, (a Favour that is indulged me by several of the Benchers who are my intimate Friends, and grown old with me in this Neighbourhood) when, according to the Nature of Men in Years, who have made but little Progress in the Advancement of their Fortune or their Fame, I was repining at the sudden Rise of many Persons who are my Juniors, and indeed at the unequal Distribution of Wealth, Honour, and all other Blessings of Life. I was lost in this Thought when the Night came upon me, and drew my Mind into a far more agreeable Contemplation. The Heaven above me appeared in all its Glories, and presented me with such an Hemisphere of Stars, as made the most agreeable Prospect imaginable to one who delights in the Study of Nature. It happened to be a freezing Night, which had purified the whole Body of Air into such a bright transparent Æther, as made every Constellation visible; and at the same Time gave such a particular Glowing to the Stars, that I thought it the richest Sky I had ever seen. I could not behold a Scene so wonderfully adorned and lighted up, (if I may be allowed that Expression) without suitable Meditations on the Author of such illustrious and amazing Objects. For on these Occasions, Philosophy suggests Motives to Religion, and Religion adds Pleasures to Philosophy. As soon as I had recovered my usual Temper and Serenity of Soul, I retired to my Lodgings with the Satisfaction of having passed away a few Hours in the proper Employments of a reasonable Creature and promising my self that my Slumbers would be sweet. I no sooner fell into them, but I dreamed a Dream, or saw a Vision (for I know not which to call it) that seemed to rise out of my Evening-Meditation, and had something in it so solemn and serious, that I cannot forbear communicating it; tho' I must confess, the Wildness of Imagination (which in a Dream is always loose and irregular) discovers it self too much in several Parts of it. Methoughts I saw the same Azure Sky diversified with the same glorious Luminaries which had entertained me a little before I fell asleep. I was looking very attentively on that Sign in the Heavens which is called by the Name of the *Ballance*, when on a sudden there appeared in it an extraordinary Light, as if the Sun should rise at Midnight. By its increasing in Breadth and Lustre, I soon found that it approached towards the Earth; and at length could discern something like a Shadow hovering in the Midst of a great Glory, which in a little Time after I distinctly perceived to be the Figure of a Woman. I fancied at first it might have been the Angel, or Intelligence that guided the Constellation from which it descended; but upon a nearer View, I saw about her all the Emblems with which the Goddess of Justice is usually described. Her Countenance was unspeakably awful and majestick, but exquisitely beautiful to those whose Eyes were strong enough to behold it; her Smiles transported with Rapture, her Frowns terrified to Despair. She held in her Hand a Mirror, endowed with the same Qualities as that which the Painters put into the Hand of *Truth*. There streamed from it a Light, which distinguished it self from all the Splendors that surrounded her, more than a Flash of Lightning shines in the Midst of Day-light. As she moved it in her Hand, it brightened the Heavens, the Air, or the Earth. When she had descended so low as to be seen and heard by Mortals, to make the Pomp of her Appearance more supportable, she threw Darkness and Clouds about her, that tempered the Light into a Thousand beautiful Shades and Colours, and multiplied that Lustre, which was before too strong and dazling, into a Variety of milder Glories.

In the mean Time the World was in an Alarm, and all the Inhabitants of it gathered together upon a spacious Plain; so that I seemed to have the whole Species before my Eyes. A Voice was heard from the Clouds, declaring the Intention of this Visit, which was, to restore and appropriate to every one living what was his Due. The Fear and Hope, Joy and Sorrow, which appeared in that great Assembly after this solemn Declaration, are not to be express'd. The first Edict was then pronounced, *That all Titles and Claims to Riches and Estates, or to any Part of 'em, should be immediately vested in the rightful Owner.* Upon this, the Inhabitants of the Earth held up the Instruments of their Tenure, whether in Parchment, Paper, Wax, or any other Form of Conveyance; and as the Goddess moved the Mirror of Truth which she held in her Hand, so that the Light which flowed from it fell upon the Multitude, they examined the several Instruments by the Beams of it. The Rays of this Mirror had a particular Quality of setting Fire to all Forgery and Falsehood. The Blaze of Papers, the Melting of Seals, and Crackling of Parchments, made a very odd Scene. The Fire very often ran through two or three Lines only, and then stopped. Tho' I could not but observe, that the Flame chiefly broke out among the Interlineations and Codicils, the Light of the Mirror, as it was turned up and down, pierced into all the dark Corners and Recesses of the Universe, and by that Means detected many Writings and Records which had been hidden or buried by Time, Chance or Design. This occasioned a wonderful Revolution among the People. At the same Time, the Spoils of Extortion, Fraud and Robbery, with all the Fruits of Bribery and Corruption, were thrown together into a prodigious Pile, that almost reached to the Clouds, and was called, *The Mount of Restitution*; to which all injured Persons were invited to receive what belong'd to them.

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One might see Crowds of People in tatter'd Garments come up, and changed Clothes with others that were dressed in Lace and Embroidery. Several who were Plumbs, or very near it, became Men of moderate Fortunes; and many others, who were overgrown in Wealth and Possessions, had no more left than what they usually spent. What moved my Concern most, was, to see a certain Street of the greatest Credit in *Europe* from one End to the other become Bankrupt.

The next Command was, for the whole Body of Mankind to separate themselves into their proper Families; which was no sooner done, but an Edict was issued out, requiring all Children *to repair to their True and Natural Fathers.* This put a great Part of the Assembly in Motion; for as the Mirror was moved over them, it inspired every one with such a natural Instinct, as directed them to their real Parents. It was a very melancholy Spectacle to see the Fathers of very large Families become Childless, and Batchelors undone by a Charge of Sons and Daughters. You might see a Presumptive Heir of a great Estate ask Blessing of his Coachman, and a celebrated Toast paying her Duty to a *Valet de Chambre.* Many under Vows of Celibacy appeared surrounded with a numerous Issue. This Change of Parentage would have caused great Lamentation, but that the Calamity was pretty common; and that generally those who lost their Children, had the Satisfaction of seeing them put into the Hands of their dearest Friends. Men were no sooner settled in their Right to their Possessions and their Progeny, but there was a Third Order proclaimed, *That all the Posts of Dignity and Honour in the Universe should be conferred on Persons of the greatest Merit, Abilities and Perfection.* The Handsome, the Strong, and the Wealthy, immediately pressed forward; but not being able to bear the Splendor of the Mirror which played upon their Faces, they immediately fell back among the Crowd: But as the Goddess tried the Multitude by her Glass, as the Eagle does its young ones by the Lustre of the Sun, it was remarkable, that every one turned away his Face from it who had not distinguished himself either by Virtue, Knowledge or Capacity in Business, either Military or Civil. This Select Assembly was drawn up in the Centre of a prodigious Multitude, which was diffused on all Sides, and stood observing them, as idle People use to gather about a Regiment that are exercising their Arms. They were drawn up in Three Bodies: In the First, were the Men of Virtue; in the Second, Men of Knowledge; and in the Third, the Men of Business. It was impossible to look at the first Column without a secret Veneration, their Aspects were so sweetened with Humanity, raised with Contemplation, emboldened with Resolution, and adorned with the most agreeable Airs, which are those that proceed from secret Habits of Virtue. I could not but take Notice, That there were many Faces among them which were unknown, not only to the Multitude, but even to several of their own Body.

In the Second Column, consisting of the Men of Knowledge, there had been great Disputes before they fell into their Ranks, which they did not do at last, without the positive Command of the Goddess who presided over the Assembly. She had so ordered it, that Men of the greatest Genius and strongest Sense were placed at the Head of the Column: Behind these, were such as had formed their Minds very much on the Thoughts and Writings of others. In the Rear of the Column, were Men who had more Wit than Sense, or more Learning than Understanding. All living Authors of any Value were ranged in one of these Classes; but I must confess, I was very much surprised to see a great Body of Editors, Criticks, Commentators, and Grammarians, meet with so very ill a Reception. They had formed themselves into a Body, and with a great deal of Arrogance demanded the first Station in the Column of Knowledge; but the Goddess, instead of complying with their Request, clapped them all into Liveries, and bid them know themselves for no other but Lacqueys of the Learned.

The Third Column were Men of Business, and consisting of Persons in Military and Civil Capacities. The former marched out from the rest, and placed themselves in the Front; at which the other shook their Heads at them, but did not think fit to dispute the Post with them. I could not but make several Observations upon this last Column of People; but I have certain private Reasons why I do not think fit to communicate them to the Publick. In order to fill up all the Posts of Honour, Dignity, and Profit, there was a Draught made out of this Column of Men, who were Masters of all Three Qualifications in some Degree, and were preferred to Stations of the first Rank. The second Draught was made out of such as were possessed of any Two of the Qualifications, who were disposed of in Stations of a second Dignity. Those who were left, and were endowed only with one of them, had their suitable Posts. When this was over, there remained many Places of Trust and Profit unfilled, for which there were fresh Draughts made out of the surrounding Multitude, who had any Appearance of these Excellencies, or were recommended by those who possessed them in Reality.

All were surprised to see so many new Faces in the most eminent Dignities; and for my own Part, I was very well pleased to see that all my Friends either kept their present Posts, or were advanced to higher.

Having filled my Paper with those Particulars of my Vision which concern the Male Part of Mankind, I must reserve for another Occasion the Sequel of it, which relates to the Fair Sex.

Advertisements.

WHereas a Performance of Musick was designed for this Day at Stationers-Hall, for the Benefit of Mr. Turner, who sets the Musick for the British Apollo; some of the Performers being engaged to Night at the Opera, he is obliged to defer it till to Morrow, being Wednesday the 30th of this Instant November, at Stationers-Hall, where will be performed an extraordinary Consort of Musick, consisting of Songs for one, two and three Voices, (particularly those Set for the British Apollo) besides several full Pieces of Musick for Trumpets, Hautboys, Violins, &c. by Mr. Dean, Mr. Manship, and others. Also a Solo of the famous Archangelo Corelli's, performed by Mr. Dean and Mr. Bulkly. To which will be added, a Two Part Song, by Mr. Turner and Mr. Reading, composed by the late famous Dr. Blow, never yet performed in Publick. The Tickets may be had at Mr. Walsh's, in Catherine-street in the Strand; Mr. Carter's, at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard, Ned's Coffee-house in Birchin-Lane, Cornhill; Mr. Mayo's, Printer, against Water-Lane, Fleet-Street; and at the Door, at 2 s. 6 d. each. To begin at Six a Clock. The Tickets dated for this Day will be taken to Morrow.

THE Perpetual Office of the Charitable Society of single Persons in City or Country, for raising and assuring Money upon Marriages; where they pay but 6 d. Entrance, and 2 s. per Quarter, till they marry; and whensoever that is, they are secured to receive all their Money back, and 150 per Cent. clear Profit certain, whether full or not, and stand very fair when full to gain 40 or 50 l. and may get 1, 2, 3, or 400 l. The Entries daily increase, and the Shares of the new Married are risen from 48 s. to above 7 l. since the last Month. The sooner you enter, the more you are like to gain; all which doth more fully appear by the Proposals, given gratis, at the said Office at London-stone in Cannon-street.

THE Famous POWDER for the STONE, GRAVEL, and STRANGURY, that has perform'd so many remarkable Cures in these Cases, of which there are continued Instances. Certificates whereof, together with the Names and Places of Abode of many that have been reliev'd by it, too numerous to be inserted here, are to be seen at Mr. Rogers's, Bookseller in Fleet-street. There are likewise several large Stones that it has brought away from divers Persons, to be seen at Mr. Aylmer's, Bookseller in Cornhill: At both which Places only it is to be sold, for 5 s. the Paper, which contains 3 Doses, with Directions. The Person who prepares it, is to be spoken with every Tuesday and Thursday, between 11 and 12, at Mr. Rogers's Shop above-mention'd.

Sold by *John Morphew* near *Stationers-Hall*; where *Advertisements* are taken in.